



# Protecting Children in Indiana

**E**ach year, more than 20,000 Indiana children are abused or neglected. That's 1,700 per month and 56 children per day — about three classrooms of children.

Indiana law requires anyone who suspects child abuse or neglect to report it to authorities. To report child abuse or neglect, call our toll-free, 24-hour, statewide hotline at 1-800-800-5556.

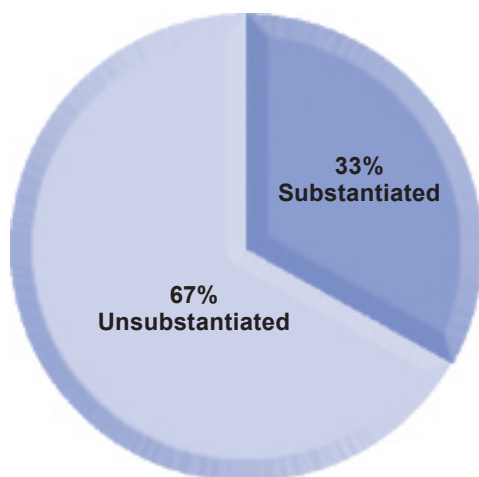
## Abuse & Neglect: SFY 2003 Statistics

*51 children died from abuse & neglect*

*61,492 children reported as victims*

*20,368 cases substantiated*

### Substantiated and Unsubstantiated Cases



**61,492 Children were reported as victims**

## What is child abuse?

Child abuse can be defined the following ways:

- Serious injury or harm experienced by a child under age 18, caused by a parent or caregiver.
- Sexual abuse can include injury or harm caused by the child's parent or caregiver, or others who are not providing care or support to the child.
- Neglect can result from inability, refusal, or neglect by the child's parent or caregiver to supply the child with necessary food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, or supervision.

## The role of Child Protective Services

Child Protective Services (CPS) protects Indiana's children from further abuse or neglect and prevents, remedies, or assists in solving problems that may result in abuse, neglect, or exploitation.

**The child's safety is the primary factor in all CPS investigations.** CPS exists to keep children safe from abusers. Even when case managers do their jobs to the best of their ability, adults still abuse children.

*"The fact that we have to have a government program to protect kids from adults is a tragedy. But it is our solemn responsibility, so we must do it well."*

*—Governor Joseph E. Kernan  
State of the State address  
January 13, 2004*

Case managers are often called into dangerous situations, forced to make immediate emergency decisions about the health and safety of children.

There are 800 family case managers statewide to investigate more than 60,000 calls a year. In 2003, the Family and Social Services Administration added 40 new front-line case managers. When a child's health and safety is in danger, case managers may remove the child from an abusive or neglectful home. Children are then placed into a safe home with an appropriate relative or emergency foster parent. This is the only time a case manager may make decisions about a child's placement unilaterally.

Within 48 hours of an emergency removal, the family's case is taken before a county judge, who decides whether to make the child a Child in Need of Services (CHINS) (removing the child from the abusive home on a more permanent basis) or return the child to the parents.

The budget to protect children in Indiana was \$627 million federal, state and local funds in State Fiscal Year 2003.

# Community Partnerships

## Child Protection Teams and Child Fatality Review Teams

In each of Indiana's 92 counties, local Child Protection Teams and Child Fatality Review Teams involve outside partners and members of local communities in helping to protect children from further abuse and neglect.

The teams include:

- outside child welfare experts and advocates
- law enforcement and prosecutors
- physicians and coroners

Child Protection Teams examine cases of abuse or neglect in their counties and help local CPS staff develop strategies for combating and investigating abuse and neglect. They also can help case managers and the court determine the best placement for a child in the foster care system.

Child Fatality Teams review each death in a county to determine if it was caused by abuse or neglect.

## Child Protection Task Force

Governor Kernan's State Child Protection Task Force will now go a step further by utilizing a hands-on group of individuals across the state with specific expertise in all areas of child protection and care.

***"I am creating, by executive order, an independent State Child Protection Task Force to investigate the circumstances of seriously endangered children. This Task Force will focus on our most vulnerable children, and will aggressively investigate complaints regarding their abusers, and find a safe place for these kids to live."***

***—Governor Joseph E. Kernan  
State of the State address  
January 13, 2004***

This new task force will work directly with Child Protective Services staff in complex cases to advise or recommend placement in the home with appro-

priate support, or recommend that the child's needs require placement elsewhere.

The result will be more consistent and appropriate placements throughout the state to better address the needs of children raised in different environments — ranging from maintaining a proper support network, to education and medical care.

## Governor's Commission on Abused and Neglected Children and Their Families

The Governor's Commission on Abused and Neglected Children and Their Families was created to look at the entire child welfare system — from prevention, to staffing, to training, to laws that cover our ability to release information.

The Commission:

- includes experts in child care, judicial matters, law enforcement, and social work
- will provide the broadest view of the system to date and offer hope for open and meaningful recommendations to improve a process where everyone has the same goal — protecting children
- will report recommendations to Governor Kernan in August 2004

### Access more information:

<http://socialwork.iu.edu/site/indexer/903/content.htm>

### Get a list of commission members:

<http://socialwork.iu.edu/site/indexer/922/content.htm>

## Healthy Families

Healthy Families Indiana is a voluntary home visitation program designed to reduce child abuse and neglect, childhood health problems and later juvenile delinquency by reaching at-risk children.

Healthy Families works:

- 98 percent of families enrolled in Healthy Families have no substantiated abuse or neglect in the following year
- Indiana was named one of only two "Centers of Excellence" in the nation by Prevent Child Abuse/Healthy Families America
- number of home visits reached 1 million in 2003

Participants are mostly low-income, single mothers under age 20 who enter the program either before or right after the birth of a child.

## Child Welfare Information

Reports of child abuse and neglect are confidential in Indiana under IC 31-33-18, except when a child's death is caused by abuse or neglect.

The Indiana General Assembly creates the laws governing confidentiality of reports. In March 2004, Governor Kernan signed HB1194, which opens portions of abuse and neglect death reports to the public.

Beginning July 1, 2004, those reports may be disclosed by county judges.

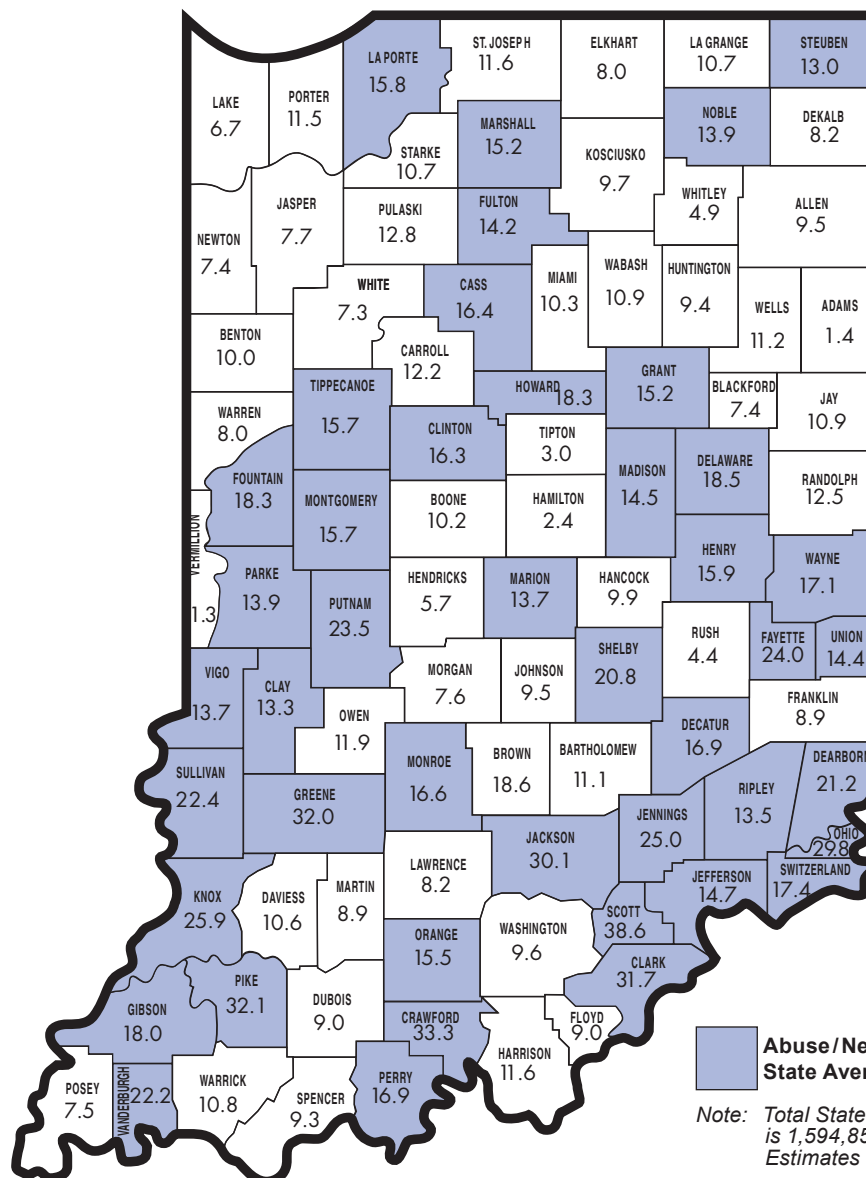
## Local prevention strategies and Kids First Trust Fund

Local prevention strategies are crucial because they address issues and help provide solutions that are important in each community. Indiana funds:

- \$2.2 million for the Kids First Trust Fund from the sale of Kids First license plates
- \$41 million dollars for Healthy Families Indiana to reduce child abuse and neglect

# Number Of Abused And Neglected Children Per 1,000 Population Under The Age Of 18

Substantiated Cases For State Fiscal Year 2003



# What *You* Can Do

**Report child abuse or neglect**  
*Call 1-800-800-5556*

**Be a mentor to a child**

**Participate in Healthy Families Indiana**  
*[www.IN.gov/fssa/families/protection/dfchealthy.html](http://www.IN.gov/fssa/families/protection/dfchealthy.html)*

**Adopt a child or become a foster parent**  
*Call 1-800-468-4228*

**Get involved in children's services at your local level;  
contact your county's Step Ahead Coordinator to find out how.**  
*[www.IN.gov/fssa/children/stepahead/index.html](http://www.IN.gov/fssa/children/stepahead/index.html)*

**To Report Child Abuse or Neglect Call Toll-Free**

## **1-800-800-5556**

Indiana law requires anyone who observes child abuse or neglect to report the situation.



### **State of Indiana**

**Family and Social Services Administration**  
402 W. WASHINGTON STREET, P.O. BOX 7083  
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA 46207-7083  
Cheryl G. Sullivan Secretary  
[www.IN.gov/fssa](http://www.IN.gov/fssa)

The Indiana Family and Social Services Administration  
does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed,  
sex, age, disability, national origin, or ancestry.